

Contributions.

THE DIFFERENCE.

DANIEL MILLER.

Brother R. Z. Replogle, in No. 33 opened the question of the differences between the two divisions, known as Progressives and German Baptists. The writer feels convinced that if every member of the progressive persuasion would write their own understanding as to what the disagreement was attributable to, there would be but very few of their compositions alike. Each one would write it out as it took place in their hearing and seeing. And I am rather inclined to think that it would be well to go over the ground again, and give the subject an airing. Perhaps nine-tenths of our members never did belong to the G. B's. and therefore know little or nothing about the disagreements and dealings; they would undoubtedly feel an interest in the perplexing days of 1881-2 and 3. Another reason for opening this historical subject is that many living witnesses are yet here that can tell their story. This cannot last long any more. In a few years more all will be silent, and none to tell what was done that brought this division about. At the time these controversies took place, some of us were perhaps a little excited and thought ourselves illy used. But now we had a long repose and are in a much better condition to make true statements void of prejudice. I have been and am still of the opinion that the bone of contention between us and our German Baptist brethren, was the clothes question to a great extent. I was what was called expelled from the old church for writing a communication in a country newspaper, explaining the difference and misunderstandings between the three factions. When the trial did come off, I took the paper containing the communication to the brother that brought in the complaint and asked him to state what is objectionable in that communication. He replied that my statement, "the clothes question will tell it all," was incorrect, as there are other things beside the clothes question that we differ." Another brother, an Elder spoke up and said, "Daniel is just right, it is the clothes question that causes the trouble between us." It is plainly evident the G. B. brethren would differ as much as we do in stating what the differences are. It is simply the old way in telling a

thing. It is just the way it is told and where we stop. Whatever the controversies were at the different localities and different charges tried by different elders, there is a point in the line along the way of our religious ancestors that was the creator of all our perplexities. I have reference to the little god that is said to be found in Matt. 18, called, "you must hear the church."

This is the most idolized portion of the Scriptures for several Christian denominations. Of course Matt. 18 does not say that you shall or must hear the church, but the applicant is taught that it infers that you must hear the church, and the applicant must promise that he or she will hear the church before he or she is accepted. Nor is this sufficient, but every year a visit is paid to each member, asking him especially, if he is still willing to take and give council as he promised in the beginning. If the construction of this Scripture as applied by our German Baptist brethren is correct, then the church is the power of God unto salvation. We believe that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. Perhaps the clothes question is only one of the things we had to contend with, but the despotism of the church grasped that and all other perplexities that could be used to our disadvantage. I still have a warm feeling for the G. B's. I still hold them as brethren in a certain sense. Once a sister in the old church gave me her hand and said, "Farewell, try and think a little better of us than you do." I never can forget that sister. My prayers are that I may think well of them. Many of them I love as my own brethren. Others I make apologies for, because in a church government where such an idolatrous opinion exists that they can bind applicants in heaven as long as they hear the church, and when they refuse to do so any longer, then loosen them and let them go somewhere else.

Is it not reasonable that such methods will have the effect to harden the heart, and modify the tender mercy and love that is so extensively taught in holy writ? And these elders and their allies are only victims to a bad thought. To prove the bad effect this "church salvation" has, we would only have to go over the ground again and point out the many trifling things members were tried and expelled for. We often hear it asserted that you was not expelled for this or that little

thing, but you were expelled because you would not hear the church. It is also often said that sometime or other there will be an effort made to unite the two factions again. Is there a member living, east, west, north or south, that is willing to go to the faction that has this whipping post still standing? If they would, it is just because they never went through the flint mill yet. I am aware that all the different subjects named by Brother Replogle are true and are other than clothes questions, but none of them can get away from the "you must hear the church." The single and double mode of feet-washing is almost expunged in the old church, at least, so far as choice is concerned, as well as other questions of similar import. Many of them were modified by the old order separating themselves, and leaving the G. B's. where they could drop off some of the most superstitious adhesions of the dark ages, which I could never be satisfied in that organization again without a change of mind. It can hardly be expected that we can agree with other members on everything, nor is it necessary that we should. I aim to live peaceably with all people and I think I make success in that direction, yet I differ in many things with even my own brethren. But charity envieth not. It is quite a different thing to accept something that will set aside the very foundation of religious liberty. Let this suffice for the present.

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MEANS OF SALVATION.

C. H. WETHERBE.

It is a most blessed thing that God uses a great variety of means in accomplishing the salvation of men. And he often employs means which, in the estimation of men, are the least likely to effect one's conversion. It is thus that God frequently surprises us. He sets at naught all of our calculations, by taking up what we reject and using it to compass the salvation of a soul. The editor of the *Southwestern Presbyterian*, referring to the lady canvasser of that paper, says: "She had a gentleman pointed out to her, somewhere in the interior, who had been soundly converted in a curious and unlikely way. It seems that a copy of the *Southwestern Presbyterian* had been subscribed for and taken by a saloonist for some time, but never read. But on one occasion, running short of wrapping paper, he used one of our papers in covering for a pur-